

Once an Enemy, now an ally  
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Summary: Mildew has been against the dragons for so long...or has he? And he betrayed Hiccup to Alvin...or did he? Where do his loyalties truly lie? And will he truly betray the training secret?

## 1. Chapter 1

It was hard for Mildew to keep doing this.

Tricking the Outcasts, tricking the boyâ€¦

\_The boy.\_

Oh, he hated himself for the guilt.

Hiccup would think Mildew had betrayed him again.

"Tell the boy I'm sorry!"

At least he'd got some twisted form of goodbye. Alvin was a clever man, and despite what Hiccup would think, he was definitely no fool.

He was too smart for Mildew to outwit on his own; could he get off Outcast Island alive?

It doesn't matter, he told himself. All that matters is that the boy is safe. We need him more than they need me.

For just a minute he thought of being allowed to go back to Berk and not officially becoming an Outcast. The Vikings of Berk would hate him. Did they not know his position? No, of course they didn't. He sighed. He had to pretend one more time and then make his escape. Could he? And then the answer came to him. He was trapped here anyway. How about Mildew make the most of it?

Mildew sat in the Great Hall, waiting rigidly for the other Outcasts to arrive. When at last they all were seated, Alvin spoke. "Because of our good friend, Mildew, a Viking of Berk, we have found the secret to training dragons without the conqueror."

Mildew swallowed and pushed himself to an upright position. "He means it. I now know the secret of training dragons. You don't need the boy anymore."

"Show me." Alvin commanded and Mildew nodded once, leaving the other Outcasts to come after them.

Hiccup was thinking about Alvin and Outcast Island and Mildew and Toothless. He was thinking of it because ever since Alvin had kidnapped Hiccup, he had been having dreams about the place. He wished he had been able to save Mildew, but that had been next to impossible. The old man had ordered him to turn back anyway and leave him. And Hiccup had seen the Outcasts getting their arrows ready to shoot. Even if it meant Mildew had to be kidnapped, he couldn't, absolutely couldn't let Toothless die. Mildew would just have to hold on until another day. Hiccup dropped his head into his hands. "We ought to go back for him, bud," he said to Toothless. It was early in the morning, just after daybreak, actually and he was in his room. "We needed him and he came for us. We owe him everything, Toothless."

Toothless nodded. Though he'd hated Mildew for a stretch of weeks, he didn't believe the man was bad anymore. He'd seen proof of it himself, of course.

Hiccup sighed and rubbed his temples with his index and middle finger on his right hand. "What can we do, Toothless? You know, I mean, what if Alvin kills him? I mean, I owed him. And if I can't save him—who will?"

No one on Berk liked the crusty old man much, but the teens and Stoick had changed their minds upon hearing the elderly citizen had saved Hiccup. If he had, Astrid owed him her best friend and Stoick owed the man his only son.

Hiccup had no wish to keep on staying up here with only thoughts of a bitter old man turned semi-okay and then kidnapped by Hiccup's archenemy. He thought about asking his father to send out a search and rescue party or let the teens go themselves. He was sure his dad wouldn't agree, however, and thought about asking the teens to go with him with only a note to tell Stoick where he was going. After traveling to the "Isle of Night" and finding out it was a hoax, he was supremely glad he'd left his map in the notebook.

He was still disappointed; what would have happened had the Isle of Night really, actually existed? And how dumb was he to think it had?

"I'm still sorry about that whole Isle of Night business," he told his best friend. "I really wished it were real for you."

Toothless moaned at him and Hiccup heard the words 'you're all the kin I need.'

Smiling at the Night Fury's kind words, Hiccup scratched him behind

the ears and walked downstairs, deciding on the spot to skip breakfast because he was sure his father hadn't made it, he wasn't sure if they had all the stuff to make a decent meal with and he didn't feel like making food anyway.

"Hey, Dad?" he called as Stoick walked in the room. He sat down in a chair, pulled a knife and a block of wood toward him and began on his morning woodwork.

"What's wrong? You're never up this early." Stoick pointed out.

Hiccup could hardly give the real reason, or at least he felt that way. He didn't want his father thinking he couldn't handle a day on Alvin's ship and a day and night on his island. So he yawned and said, "No reason, really. Just felt a little like getting started a little earlier than normal."

Hiccup found he couldn't look at his father as he said the next few words. "Dad? You remember how we left Mildew on the island?"

"Yeahhh?" Stoick knew where Hiccup was going.

He was such a noble idiot sometimes.

"Well, uhâ€¦I was thinking, uhâ€¦I was just kinda thinking I owe himâ€¦" Hiccup began to speak more confidently and he met his father's eye. "I owe him and I don't feel right about letting him be on Outcast Island. The least I can do is to go back and get him. Can we get a search party or something to helpâ€¦?"

"I see where you're coming from, Hiccup. I do. But we can't put everyone at risk to get Mildew backâ€¦"

"Then let me."

"Huh?"

"Let me. I was great at stealthy, I got off that island real easy. Please let me save him. If he doesn't get saved, if he doesn't get help from somewhere, what do you think will happen?"

"Let you? Let you? Uh, no."

"What? Why not?" Hiccup demanded.

"Does the fake 'Isle of Night' ring a bell? They're probably keeping him there as bait for you!"

Hiccup laughed. It was humorless and low. "Bait? Yeah, right. I may owe him my life but if he was just baitâ€¦" he let his voice trail off. "Alvin isn't that stupid. But I know Mildew is being kept somewhere and possibly hurt and if he is, it's all my fault." Hiccup's voice was low and sad. "I've got to help him out."

Stoick swallowed. "Hiccup."

"Yeah?"

"I promise you this isn't your fault."

Hiccup snorted sarcastically. "Yeah. Right. I'd feel a whole lot better about this if you'd just let me go and fetch him."

"Hiccup, no!"

"Why not?"

"How many times have you put yourself in danger just for somebody else? Once? Twice? A hundred? This can't go on!"

"I'M STILL ALIVE, AREN'T I?"

"Alive isn't good enough!"

"It's gonna have to be!"

"Why do you have to be this way?"

"You know what, forget it," Hiccup snapped, grabbing his riding vest off the table. "He's going to get off that island one way or another and I'm going to get him."

"Hiccup, I'm your father! You must obey me!" Even as the words were said, both knew it wasn't about the old man.

Hiccup said angrily, "FINE! IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYWAY!" He stalked out, Toothless seconds behind him, and Stoick saw him take off in the direction of the Hofferson house.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: So this is my new story. It's a whole new take on the 'Mildew-is-a-despicable-traitor' thing. What if he was secretly a spy? But no one knew. And he has this invaluable Outcast information completely at his fingertips and no one but \*hiss, whisper\* knows ;-)  
XD so just tell me whatever you think :)\*\*

## 2. Chapter 2

Mildew smiled, watching the Outcasts attempt to befriend the dragons. "They may have difficulty trusting you!" he warned them. "You've been abusing them for years."

"Do we need new dragons?" Alvin asked, watching the procedure with evident disgust. "Or do you think they'll let us touch and ride them?"

"Well, training a dragonâ€¦" Mildew swallowed. Begins and ends with trust. Did it?

\* \* \*

><p>Stoick waited on the docks as Mildew came into view.<p>

"What news do you have?" he asked tersely.

"They don't want Hiccup anymore," Mildew said in a low voice. "But I

couldn't avoid revealing some secrets of dragon training."

"Is that all?"

"They're attacking Berk."

Stoick swallowed audibly. "When?"

"In about two weeks. They want to get a feel for their dragons."

"What types do they have?"

"Nadders, Gronckles, Zipplebacks, two Changewings one Scauldron and one Thunderdrum."

"No Night Furies?" Stoick asked, relieved.

"No."

Mildew jumped off his Nadder. Hey, he didn't mind the things. Blatant lie. He was still terrified of it but he had been friendly. "The outlook is bad, but we can defend ourselves if we get our beasts and weapons together. It's the least we can do."

"What will you do?" the red-haired Viking demanded.

"I will travel back to Outcast Island and attempt to cut off their ranks."

"Good! "

Mildew was calmly discussing killing like it was nothing.

He sighed, rubbed his beard and said, "How do we explain it to the people of Berk? I have to!"

"We won't tell them anything," Stoick said. "The less people who know, the better. Less chance of it getting around, as you know."

Mildew nodded. "I know." Berk would have to think of him as an Outcast then. Or maybe they'd see him as Hiccup did: a harmless but irritating old coot.

Mildew stumbled to his home, but Hiccup saw him as he left Astrid's house. He had been considering ignoring his father and jumping on Toothless and flying to Outcast Island.

Astrid had been heavily discouraging and now he was just about to leave when he stopped, noticing Mildew. "How?" "why?"

He went up to the elderly man. "Mildew!"

"Yeah?" Mildew asked, looking around and finally looking down to see Hiccup.

"Where WERE you? How did you get off Outcast Island?" Hiccup demanded.

Mildew was excellent at thinking on his feet. "Your father had already sent out a search-and-rescue mission to get me." He gave a smile that showed his yellowing teeth. "Why?"

"You were here, then you were THEREâ€|"

"I know," Mildew said, holding up a hand to stop the boy. "It's a little confusing. But Iâ€"

"And did you mean that you really are sorry?" he interrupted.

Mildew nodded. "Now let me by, scrawny, I want to go home."

Hiccup rolled his eyes and stood by, letting the man pass but as he did Mildew turned back around and looked at him for a second, sadly.

Then he shook himself and stumbled on home, boots grinding into the dirt.

\* \* \*

><p>Alvin sent the letter and received the answer within two days' time.<p>

"They'll be glad to team up with us," Savage responded, reading the letter. "This sounds good."

"Only one more tribe to persuade," Alvin announced to his men. "And Stoick will never know what hit him!"

As the Outcasts celebrated, Alvin tapped on Savage. "Send word to Mildew. We attack Berk at sunset in four weeks."

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: As you can see, there's going to be a lot of that old man in these chapters so I recommend you either 1. respect him as a villain or 2. like him just by being him in that way you kinda like Dagur if you want to read this story. Um, also, Alvin. Telling Mildew. Yes, he wants that old man to be in the loop, because he sees him as a valuable spy on the PEOPLE OF BERK when really Mildew is a spy FOR them not the OUTCASTS the way Alvin thinks he is. \*\*

### 3. Chapter 3

"They attack in four weeks!" Mildew said. The startled cry echoed in his empty old house.

"I've gotta see the chief about this," he said and ran, panting, to Stoick's house.

When he arrived, he ran up to Stoick, calmly practicing his morning woodwork. "Chief, it's bad," Mildew announced. "They attack in five days' time and they've joined up with four other tribes. They have much larger numbers than the first time."

Stoick dropped his knife. "What?"

"What?" Hiccup stood up from the table. "Who attacks in five days? What four tribes?" he asked urgently.

"Hiccup, you don't need to know," Stoick said with a dismissive wave of his hand. "We'll handle this. You don't need to know."

Hiccup drew back and Mildew said, "The Outcasts are attacking, Hiccup. And the four other tribes are the Meatheads, the Hysterics, the Murderous andâ€" swallowing he said, "The Berserkers."

Hiccup swallowed.

Stoick shot Mildew a look.

"Hiccup didn't need to knowâ€"

"Yes, I did."

"Hiccupâ€"

"He knows now, Stoick." Mildew pointed out and then Hiccup asked, "Wait, how do you know all this?"

"All what?" Mildew stalled.

"About the attacking? And the Meatheads, Hysterics, Murderous and B-berserkers?"

Mildew swallowed and turned into his nasty old self. "You ask questions too much, boy," he said angrily. "Nose out. I've told you everything you needed to know."

Hiccup glared at him and there was a long moment of just plain awkward silence.

Thenâ€" "Let me fight, then."

"What?"

"If Alvin or Dagur is attacking Berk, I want to fight! Teach me how to fight, Dad!"

"Hiccup, do you not understand all Alvin is capable of?" Stoick demanded, slamming a fist against the table. "After surviving being captured by him and seeing him face-to-face three times, aren't you the least bit scared of him?"

"I'm only scared for my friends and family," Hiccup said. "Let me learn how to fight!"

"No." There was a long moment of silence and Stoick said, "I'll announce it to the men. They better start training."

He walked out, leaving Hiccup to seethe and stew and Mildew to pick up an axe from the wall and examine it closely before he carefully hung it back on the wall, looked at Hiccup and said, "I think you'd be best with a sword."

"What?" Hiccup wasn't listening; he was glaring after his father, leaving Mildew to think a bit.

"Yes, you definitely would," he said and plucked one off the wall, handing it to Hiccup.

Hiccup just looked at it for a second.

"Well, go on, take it," Mildew encouraged and Hiccup obliged nervously.

"What am Iâ€" CLUNK. The sword weighed Hiccup down and caused him to fall on the wooden floor face-first.

He handed Mildew back his weapon.

"You've only got four weeks to learn how to fight." Mildew said.

"If it weren't giving it your entirety, it'd be a big waste of time, don't you think?"

Hiccup's whole face lit up when he realized what the man was talking about. "You're serious? You'd train me?"

"Maybe not to fight, but to defend yourself and other villagers," Mildew said. "And what do you think, I'm going to go train you behind the chief's back? I'm many things, but dishonest isn't one of them." Hiccup just looked at him.

Mildew sighed. "Fine. Maybe a little dishonest. Look, the point is, you want me to help you or not? I could convince Stoick, I could train youâ€"|"

Hiccup hesitated a moment, then was struck by a rude question. "You're old as dirt! What can you teach me, what can you do, anyway?"

And then Mildew picked up a sword, lunged at Hiccup and took numberless swings with it, all the while missing only by a hair and that was only on purpose. Mildew smirked. "Really, you can't defend yourself at all. It's pathetic, Hiccup."

All the while Hiccup had been pressed against the wall, taking deep, rapid breaths to calm himself. At that, he scowled.

Mildew chuckled a little, but quickly stopped. Mildew didn't laugh, and if he did, it was sadistically. "Relax, boy, I'm not going to hurt you. But question my fighting skills next time and I might just have to."

Hiccup swallowed and sank to the ground. "Could you teach me how to use that?"

"You're not the natural Viking," Mildew admitted. "But if it's at all possible, and if Stoick says yes, and if you don't mind killing, yes, I will train you."

"Those are an awful lot of conditions," Hiccup said grumpily.

"Deal with them. I need to make sure you're completely ready for this. Remember how awful you were in dragon training?"



"Hey!" Hiccup said. "I got better!"

"Only after meeting Toothless."

"Well, I didn't understand themâ€"

"I'm not asking for a lesson on the beasts. What I'm trying to tell you is that you are a complete cream puff."

Hiccup just stared.

"You know, wimp?"

Hiccup looked affronted. "I'm not a wimp, I'm  
aâ€"

"Jellyfish?"

Hiccup glared.

"Okay, okay, I'm done," Mildew held his hands up in surrender. "But the point is, you depend on Toothless too much. Yes, maybe he'll protect you now, but years later, if he gets murdered protecting yâ€"

"Toothless isn't going to get murdered!" Hiccup protested.

"Learn to defend yourself. Otherwise you're an utter goner."

"What about Dad?"

Mildew just shrugged.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: Okay, so I know it was stated they'd attack in four weeks, but I DON'T CARE. I needed more time! So they're attacking in four weeks now instead.\*\*

\*\*Now, besides THAT, I would like to apologize in case of any OOC-ness on Mildew's part. \*\*

\*\*He's probably going to be wildly OOC in this fanfic because everything in the show is wrong about him basically.\*\*

\*\*So that explains his OOC-ness.\*\*

#### 4. Chapter 4

"No, no, no! Absolutely, positively not! Why would I let Hiccup fight?"

"Because he needs to know how to defend himself."

Stoick inwardly flinched as Mildew addressed the issue. "It's not good for him. Hiccup hates war. He has no muscles or strengths whatsoever, he can't use a weapâ€"

"How 'bout this?" Mildew asked. "You let me train Hiccup. You give

him a week. Maybe two. If he shows that he's strong enough to fight, you let him. If he isn't, you don't. Just give him a CHANCE."

Stoick rolled his eyes. "When you have a swooning Hiccup on your handsâ€¦"

"I'll bring him over and we'll say no more about it."

"I want you to write down Hiccup's strengths, weaknesses and what you taught him. Every day. I want to see sign of progress in that notebook."

Mildew nodded.

"A week," Stoick said. "That's all you get."

"Four weeks."

"Five days."

"Three weeks."

"Fine."

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: Short, but the next chapter is coming soon!\*\*

## 5. Chapter 5

At the end, Mildew's notebook looked like this:

Day 1 of Training:

Subject: Self-defense

Notes: Hiccup couldn't lift anything bigger than a small knife.

Result: Success.

\* \* \*

><p>Day 2 of Training<p>

Subject: More self-defense

Notes: We practiced with a small dagger this time.

Result: Success

\* \* \*

><p>Day 3 of Training<p>

Subject: Strategies to build Hiccup's strength

Notes: He nearly passed out.

Result: We were both exhausted.

\* \* \*

><p>Day 4 of Training:<p>

Subject: Review

Notes: Hiccup was mainly okay at this.

Result: Success

\* \* \*

><p>Day 5 of Training:<p>

Subject: Killing

Notes: We practiced with a dummy. Hiccup has zero fighting skillsâ€|

Result: It was good for entertainment.

\* \* \*

><p>Day 6 of Training:<p>

Subject: Hand-To-Hand combat

Notes: He has spirit. That's all I'm saying.

Result: Do not TRY to get him riled up.

\* \* \*

><p>Day 7 of Training:<p>

Subject: Archery

Notes: He taught me math (by knocking off seven Viking helmets, shooting nineteen trees and basically anything but the target)

Result: Spitelout was really mad.

\* \* \*

><p>Day 8 of Training:<p>

Subject: Sword fighting

Notes: Hiccup is left-handed. He was mediocre at best.

Result: Success

\* \* \*

><p>Day 9 of Training:<p>

Subject: Axe throwing

Notes: â€|There are no words

Result: We are going to spend the evening patching up minor injuries.

\* \* \*

><p>Day 10 of Training:<p>

Subject: Review

"Okay, Hiccup!" Mildew called, snapping his notebook closed. "We're doing some review today! Should be easy!"

"It's not more archery is it?" Hiccup asked nervously.

Mildew grinned. "No. No axe-throwing, either. Not afterâ€|that. Anyway, it's just some review."

"Thank Thor."

"We're also gonna be practicing some sword fighting."

"Why?" Hiccup asked. "I stink at sword fightingâ€"

"No, you stink at archery," Mildew said.

Hiccup winced. The memory of day 7 was still fresh in his mind.

"Look, maybe-maybe I shouldn't do it," Hiccup said. "I'm wasting your time, Mildew!"

"Are you giving it your all?"

"Well, I'm tryingâ€"

"Then you're not wasting my time. Now c'mon."

\* \* \*

><p>Day 10 of Training:<p>

Subject: Review

Notes: It went well.

Result: Success

\* \* \*

><p>Day 11 of Training:<p>

Subject: Hammer throwing

Notes: Do not ever let a nervous Hiccup near a hammer.

Result: Failure

\* \* \*

><p>Day 12 of Training:<p>

Subject: Speed

Notes: Hiccup was very good. He is difficult to catch and knows where to hide so he cannot be seen. He is very agile, but lacks the necessary strength to put up an actual fight once you have caught him.

Result: Success

\* \* \*

><p>Day 13 of Training:<p>

Subject: Offense

Notes: â€|

Result: \*sigh\* Do you have to ask?

\* \* \*

><p>Day 14 of Training:<p>

Subject: Knife throwing

Notes: Hiccup has no aim and no strength.

Result: Gothi is now out of bandages, and Hiccup has picked up colorful language from Gobber.

\* \* \*

><p>Day 15 of Training:<p>

Subject: Review of Killing and Offense

Notes: This is going to be a weeklong affairâ€|

Result: Failure

\* \* \*

><p>Day 16 of Training:<p>

Subject: Review of Killing and Offense

Notes: Slightly better. He still hesitates at crucial moments, giving enemies time to get under his guard, and he seems to avoid putting anyone through true pain as much as possible.

Result: Not such an epic fail.

\* \* \*

><p>Day 17 of Training:<p>

Subject: Review of Killing and Offense

Notes: Stoick should have warned me.

Result: Failure

\* \* \*

><p>Day 18 of Training:<p>

Subject: Review of Killing and Offense

Notes: Hiccup is quicker more often now, but he still remains incapable of being a physical threat to anyone.

Result: Not a success, but not a complete and total failure.

\* \* \*

><p>Day 19 of Training:<p>

Subject: Review of Killing and Offense

Notes: â€|

Result: We're back to square one.

Day 20 of Training:

Subject: Review

Notes: Hiccup is doing better.

Result: If I can make it through one more dayâ€|

Day 21 of Training:

Subject: Review

Notes: Hiccup is better than when we started, especially at self-defense. His sword fighting has improved noticeably and he has gained weight and is now a little healthier than when we started.

Result: It may take another week.

"The point is, determination doesn't add up to strength in a fight!"

"I know, but if you'd just let meâ€|"

"You need another week, Hiccup. And even then, you won't be ready to face Alvin!"

"Yes, I can!"

"Oh, really? If Alvin came through here right now, what would you do?"

"Well, it dependsâ€|"

"If he was coming for you, what would you do?"

"Try to hurt him."

"Show me."

Hiccup hesitated.

"C'mon, Hiccup, one more time!"

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: Lol. I genuinely enjoyed writing this chapter xD I could just SEE Hiccup in the training center, taking turns with a hammer and stuff. lol. I can also see him becoming a reasonably good fighter in my mind's eye, but that might just be because Fighter Hiccup just SOUNDS too hot to handle lol.\*\*

\*\*Lol. Anyway, I tried making this chapter humorous, as the angst was kind of boring lol.\*\*

\*\*Anyway, so now Hiccup is officially almost finished with his training. Maybe Stoick will accept him, maybe not.\*\*

\*\*Three weeks passed in that chapter, and you didn't get to see much of it, so I'll stretch the week. 'Bye!\*\*

## 6. Chapter 6

\*\*A/N: Oh, guys! I'm so sorry for that long break I took! During that break, I was actually writing this chapter, but I wrote several different versions of it. I still don't like the chapter much, but I decided to put some book stuff in there. Normally whenever I try and mix book and movie, it comes out awkward. i.e. this one. \*\*

\*\*But I was thinking of Hiccup's whole 'yay, I can fight!' in book two. I actually DID read the books and am following both book series and movie series religiously.\*\*

\*\*However, I'm kind of freaking out, because no new D.O.B until September 4th, and no new books until November 5th! :( It's going to be a loooooong summer...Anyway, seeing as I rambled for way too long in this AN, I will let you go now. However, be glad none of you (or did you?) read To Be Loved the Way You Love Me or Collide. I have the longest ANs EVER in those!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Day 22 of Training:<p>

Subject: Stealth

"Okay, Hiccup," Mildew announced. "Now we're gonna walk a little ways into the forest and practice stealth. If you're going to take the enemy by surprise, you have to be sneaky."

As Hiccup opened his mouth, Mildew said, "No, Hiccup. Escaping from Outcast Island with my help does not make you sneaky."

Hiccup looked slightly affronted and closed his mouth.

"Whatever."

"Now," Mildew continued, picking up a sword and twirling it. "Once you practice stealth, then it's time for another sword fight. We'll take a break, get something to eat, down some water and keep going. Stealth, sword fighting, speed, killing and offense, everything. A review day with some new stuff thrown in."

Hiccup nodded, eyes fixed on the sword Mildew carried.

"Also," Mildew continued in his sternest voice, "you're not allowed to skip meals and do some more training instead. And don't try to protest, I know you've done it at least twice, your father's been telling me."

"On very good terms with my father, now, aren't you?" muttered Hiccup bitterly.

Mildew sighed.

"Hey, tell me," Hiccup said, "how long have you been a spy for the people of Berk?"

"Almost sixteen years," Mildew said brusquely and refused to say anything more, just led Hiccup into the forest.

They practiced stealth training all afternoon and when Hiccup looked like he'd pretty much have to crawl home, Mildew let him go.

He slowly walked back to his own house, letting the cool, afternoon breeze swirl around him. It was a day they didn't get much: cool, yet the sky was clear and carried no hint of rain for miles.

He glanced up at the sky. Perfect day for training, in his opinion.

A few minutes later, Hiccup was clutching a canteen of water and standing in the arena, holding a sword.

He gave it a swift thrust and kicked out with his leg the same time, a move Mildew had shown him.

All the best moves, he'd told Hiccup, were the oldest tricks in the book.

When Mildew heard Hiccup's voice coming from the arena ("thank you for nothing, you useless sword!") he quickly walked in and stood watching Hiccup from the darkened entrance.

Hiccup slowly raised his head and walked back over to the sword. "Okay, fine. I'm sorry I called you a useless sword. I justâ€¦I really need to learn to fight in a few daysâ€¦and Odinâ€¦"

He covered his face with his hands, overwhelmed. He sat like that for awhile. Then he finally removed them and stood back up, picking up the sword and doing several quick thrusts.

Mildew's eyebrows flew up. This skinny kid was starting to show some promise.



Raw determination burned in Hiccup's eyes as he did the same moves, over and over again, clumsy and slow.

Finally, he looked down at his hands and sighed. "Ughâ€|"

Then he picked up the sword, balancing it in his left hand and taking a few half-hearted swings.

He began trying it again, and Mildew was surprised when this time it came out slightly better than before.

He kept at it for a long period of time, until finally, he flung the sword away and turned around, facing Mildew.

When he saw Mildew there, he quickly scrambled to wipe his sweaty face. "Oh. Mildew. Hi."

"What were you doing?" Mildew asked. "That was really good! That was excellent! Do it again, Hiccup!"

"Iâ€|were you watching that?" muttered an embarrassed Hiccup.

"It was great," Mildew declared. "Let's see it happen again."

Hiccup tugged the sword up and slowly did it a second time. Then a third time. Pretty soon, his hand felt wobbly and weak from holding the sword. But he was happy, because Mildew was pleased.

"Hiccup, I think you really might have just discovered something you're good at," he said. "The only question is, why were you only okay at it the first time?"

Hiccup shrugged, cheeks flushed from Mildew's praise. "I dunnoâ€|"

"Were you holding out on me or something?" laughed Mildew. He was happy today; he was making progress!

"Umâ€|not really, I mean I guess I wasn't trying as hard as I could have, but I assumed I'd be just as bad at sword fighting as everything else," Hiccup confessed.

"Do not ever think that again," Mildew declared. "I nearly didn't see how good you are, Hiccup. You're excellent!"

Hiccup shrugged again. "Well, it wasn't that impressive, Mildewâ€|"

They parted ways and when Hiccup got home, Stoick idly looked up from his plate. "Meat's on the stove," he told Hiccup.

Hiccup nodded, sighed and went to get it. He slowly stabbed a piece of game with his fork, chewing reflectively. "Dad?"

"Mmm?"

"You said if I'm any good at fighting, I can help defend Berk, right?"

Stoick slowly nodded. "But first you have to prove it to

\_meâ€"\_

"Okay." Hiccup interrupted and lapsed back into silence. For Thor's sake, he wasn't that good at sword fighting!

There was an awkward silence so loud that you could actually feel the awkwardness in it.

Hiccup kept glancing down at his plate, pushing the food around, thinking maybe he could find something he really was good at.

Despite Mildew trying to convince him, Hiccup was pretty much certain he was not going to impress his father with some fancy weapon work.

Well, that's ok, he thought to himself. I've still got six days.

## 7. Chapter 7

**\*\*A/N:** This actually started out really badly...I edited bits of it, because I decided that you guys, as my loyal readers, didn't deserve the torture of a first draft...Why, look, not a long AN! I'm really sorry about how long it's been! It's so late, it's been so long and I'm so tired I accidentally saved this to my computer as Chapter 8, not chapter 7. Stupid me. :P\*\*

**\*\*Also, guys, let it be known some things about this chapter before reading it: \*\***

**\*\*Hiccup - Okay.** Hiccup's a little fuzzy right here. In this story and especially in this chapter, he feels like he's got something to prove to Stoick and everyone around him. And of course, after all Mildew's done for him, he really wants to make the cut for Mildew, too.\*\*

**\*\*Stoick - Let's put it this way:** if you were a very great artist and some newbie comes along, wanting to paint a picture, would you hand them a paintbrush and tell them to paint like Leonardo Da Vinci?  
\*\*

**\*\*Mildew - Mildew,** in this chapter, is struggling with feelings of nervousness at the beginning. You see, he's put all this work into making Hiccup a proper warrior. It matters a great deal to him if Hiccup makes it or not. So you'll understand his reactions at the end. And of course, he starts feeling proud as well...hope that's non-spoiler-ish! \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Okay." Mildew whispered. "You're gonna be greatâ€|just remember your techniquesâ€|don't hesitateâ€|"<p>

"I'm gonna be fine," Hiccup murmured to himself, hands twisting nervously in his lap. He was almost as nervous as Mildew himself.

It was a few minutes before Stoick decided whether or not Hiccup was ready to fight, after all.

"You're going to be great," Mildew repeated.

He noticed the Viking fighters lining up and gasped. "It's starting! Quick! Quick! Get in line!" He gave Hiccup a gentle shove in line and Hiccup stumbled forward, clutching a feather-light sword and shield.

The shield was plain and wooden while the sword was plain and silver. Ordinary, unremarkable pieces of weaponry, but Hiccup liked them well.

They suited his tastes.

Stoick inspected each man and woman preparing for battle. He inspected them carefully, as it was three nights before Alvin attacked.

They each gave him a short demonstration of their fighting skills and he decided whether they were ready or not.

"Alright," he nodded approvingly at a blonde woman and turned to Hiccup. The auburn-haired boy couldn't help noticing he repressed a sigh when he turned his small gray eyes on his son. "Alright, Hiccup. Show me what you got."

Hiccup gulped, lifted the sword higher, and did exactly what Mildew told him to do.

He demonstrated his fighting skills in the best way possible, using the moves that showed off all his strengths and none of his weaknesses. That was his own plan; Mildew had warned him to let some of his weaknesses show through.

There was a long silence when he'd finished and Hiccup met Stoick's eyes. He saw unsaid words and unspoken disappointment, there, that Hiccup had gone against his father's wishes by attempting to fight anyway. He'd disappointed him. He knew it. He was prepared, thus, for what Stoick said next.

"I'm sorry, son. No."

\* \* \*

><p>Later that night, as Hiccup was just getting back from a flight on Toothless, he saw Mildew anxiously pacing Stoick's front porch. "What's up?" called Hiccup, jumping off Toothless.<p>

Toothless lay down on the ground, gazing up at the two as they talked.

"You didn't make it in?" demanded Mildew. Hiccup could tell by his tone, by his staff at his side, that the man was disappointed.

To be honest, Hiccup didn't blame him one bit. The Viking had put his heart and soul into teaching Hiccup all he knew and Hiccup had failed him.

He sighed, running his fingers through his hair. "I'm sorry I wasted your timeâ€¦"

"It's okay," Mildew waved away his apology. "I've fixed more hopeless cases than you, son."

Hiccup scowled a little.

Mildew sighed and sat down on the porch. It creaked loudly under his weight. He patted the space next to him and Hiccup sat beside him.

"Thank you for teaching me everything," Hiccup blurted. "I know I was really ungrateful and at times, I was kind of sarcastic with youâ€"

"Hiccup, if you weren't sarcastic, I'd wonder if we needed Gothi."

Hiccup scowled again and Mildew chuckled.

"It's alright." He said, patting Hiccup on the back. "I knew you wouldn't be ready. On the other hand, though, you're gonna be ready next time if you just keep practicingâ€|"

"If you knew I wouldn't be ready, why did you waste your time?"

"Because," Mildew replied honestly, "because your heart was so set on fighting for your village. Most Vikings just love a fight, but you're different from most. It wasn't your love for a fight that made me want to train you, Hiccup. It was your bravery."

Hiccup bit his lip and cocked his head. "Myâ€|bravery?"

"Yes," Mildew chuckled. "When I was telling Stoick about Alvin attacking, Hiccup, you looked scared to death. And you still asked to fight. You asked to fight despite the fear, because your village mattered more to you than the possibility of losing your life."

Hiccup looked down at the sword and shield he was still clutching.

Mildew smiled at him fondly, then stood up and stumbled away, back towards his own home.

## 8. AN

**\*\*Dear readers,\*\***

**\*\*I'm very, very sorry to tell you this, but it seems unlikely that I will be posting anything again until 2014. My computer has been very temperamental lately, and I can't get a new one until 2014, and I won't be updating very much until then. I love writing and it hurts to have to be away from it for so long and to deprive my readers of some more angst, but I can't do it with a computer like mine. I hope you all understand. \*\***

**\*\*Thank you,\*\***

**\*\*.ryder\*\***

## 9. An AN

**\*\*Dear readers,\*\***

**\*\*I'm sorry to tell you this, but I'm afraid I must discontinue this story. I am working on many others at the moment and my schedule simply won't allow another. Furthermore, I have been going back through my old stories lately and have redone one in full already, and I intend to do that with others - this one might possibly be included!\*\***

**\*\*I apologize once again \*\***

**\*\* - .ryder\*\***

End  
file.